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Episode Transcript

Performance as Resistance

October 21, 2021 5pm

Brenda Hernandez: My name is Brenda Hernandez. I am the AMP Seeds events manager. I am so excited, thrilled, ecstatic, all of those words, to welcome you to today's event, Performance As Resistance. We're so grateful to share this virtual space with you. And our incredible guests, Michi Osata, Junior Mintt, Morgan Bassichis, and our sparkling host Una Osata. This will have live interpretation and closed captioning. Be sure to turn on captions using the CC button at the bottom of the frame somewhere here. And just so y'all know, this event will have some nudity, so please be sure to check your surroundings if you're at work or, you know, you have people that you don't want to share this magical night with. And without further ado, let's give a warm, sparkly and very joyous welcome to Una, Michi, Morgan, and Junior.

Una Osata: I'm unmuted, and welcome! [LAUGHTER] We're so glad you're here. My name is Una Osata and I'll be your host for the evening. I welcome you into my room. And a trigger warning for the Virgo, the Capricorns, and the Tauruses, I'm a hoarder and I apologize. And you're welcome to all the air signs, Geminis, Libras, Aquariuses, you get me. We're so happy you're here. This is going to be such an exciting evening. We have an amazing panel of artists. We're going to be sharing their work and wow! I just need it. This is the panel I've needed. This is the panel that's gotten me through the pandemic. I have been sick with COVID March of 2020. I have long COVID. So I've been in this room staring at these clothes and working on my hoarding skills and buying things but not anything from... but supporting the boycott, so not anything from Israel. And I'm so glad that now I can finally share it with somebody. And these are the people that have gotten me through the pandemic. And I'm just so grateful they're here. And again, this is Junior Mintt. We've got Silver Selva, Morgan Bassichis, and this is my heart in the screens. So welcome. You all can unmute yourselves. I'm going to turn off my fan. Because it's so hot and I'm sweaty. Oh, wait. Okay. Can I show y'all my outfit? It's clean. Okay, okay. So... [drumroll] Okay. [LAUGHTER] Sometimes you've just got to feel yourself.





Michi Osata: Feel yourself up.

Una Osata: Feel yourself up. So we'll take these questions as seriously or not as we want and we'll just go from there. What makes you feel yourself? Like everything is terrible and yet you all create such incredible work and organize and just share so much with the world. What makes you feel yourself and what gives you inspiration? Anyone can start. Everyone will answer! [LAUGHTER] Only if you wanted to. Only if you want to.

Junior Mintt: I think I know what mine would be because for me it's always rooted back to being with my community. Because as a Black trans woman I always know what it's like to feel othered in a space. I always know what it's like to feel on the outside in a space. And the thing that always rejuvenates me, it always fills my cup up and fills my soul, reminds me of my own power, my own beauty, is always being around my community. Because being around my community was the first time I ever walked into a space and I immediately felt I'm meant to be here. I'm not just here. I'm not just here to have a good time. No, I'm meant to be here. And looking around and seeing people who look like me, love like me, think like me, express themselves like me, it's healing. And it always reminds me to be myself more beautifully and powerfully because that's what my community does every day.

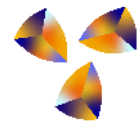
Una Osata: Yes! Yes! Just yes!

Junior Mintt: And this is why I should be Miss America. Thank you.[LAUGHTER]

Una Osata: And you are. And you've been crowned. Others? What helps you feel yourself or what gives you inspiration or anything you want to say.

Morgan Bassichis: Oh, you're giving it to me. Okay, Michi. Only a sister's love right there. You go. You go first. You know, go ahead. Go for it. Well, I would say, I mean, the sisters, I mean, like these sisters, like absolutely would be nowhere, could be nowhere, would be you know what I mean? There's nothing, there's no such thing as individual. Anytime, it's just like the fact of like the "we." The "we." The we is rejuvenating. And the we you can be alone from but still know you can trust it's there. Because I'm definitely a feline who's like don't come near me but stick around, you know what I mean? The "we" that let's you wander and come back. I'll say that's what rejuvenates me. Happy to be here. And congratulations Junior Mintt on being Miss America.





Junior Mintt: Thank you for your vote.

Michi Osata: Yeah, I'm going to say similarly. Just like bad bitches being bad bitches. Giving each other that love. Reflecting back. I've been having a lot of experiences of “reentering the world” or “public space” or issues. I've always had issues wearing clothing, you know? And I find myself lately out in the world too often getting filmed by people and feeling so uncomfortable. And it's caused me to be a little bit more protective, a little more introverted. And then these moments when I'm feeling just stifled, you know? Feeling I want to be myself, I want to be as big as I am. I want to shine as bright as I am, but I'm scared to, then when I see other bad bitches just like giving that love and reflecting it back and forth and back and forth, then I just like remember. Then I can explode out, and I'm just so grateful for that. And it keeps me going every single day.

Una Osata: Ah. Yeah. Yeah, I'm going to copycat all my sisters is the community, is everyone shining their brightest which like gives me permission to be like yeah, I don't need to like...I just need to be...I'm not small. Just being our fullest selves. And I think of like the ocean has been like the only place besides being with my loves that I feel that my body is at ease. And I just think about like how and big and vast my... and that's us. And we are. And that is. Just yeah. Okay. So moving along, we're going to be watching pieces. I don't want anyone to give anything away, but in case there's something you want to say before your piece, any context you feel like you want to give but you don't have to, is there anyone who would like to talk about their piece? And you don't have to. Like you can... well, I will say, all of these pieces from the three of you are all... this is the first time they'll be debuted in this way on the Internet, so this is just like O.M.G. audience. Like what? What? You're seeing world premieres. So okay? Anyone want to add anything?

Junior Mintt: I would say that my piece very much ties into what you were saying as to like when you were by the ocean and something so vast and something so healing about that is sometimes I do like to feel like a small fish in a very big ocean because it reminds me I have the freedom to do anything I want and I can get inside of my own head and trip myself up and try to be a million steps ahead. And I say all of that because I grew up in the Black Baptist church and so one of the spaces I never felt comfortable or feel like I could bring my full self and be my full personality and take up as much space as I feel I could is church, so the piece is very, very tied to a lot of healing that I've gotten to do as a Black trans person in terms of understanding that I deserve to take up space in every environment and in every single possible space because there are Black trans people in the church. There are Black trans people in every possible space possible and I deserve to take up that space. And also fun fact, I





was actually baptized a woman, too. And I like to say that the Lord already knew because my name out of drag is like Junior still and it's Junior Johnson. And they baptized me Sister Junior Johnson. My mother was telling me literally the Lord already knew, the Lord already signed the check. What y'all won't do is misgender when you baptize her. When you watch the piece, just know that a lot of emotional healing has happened in order for that piece to even happen. So yeah.

Una Osata: Thank you. Oh.

Junior Mintt: I love you.

Una Osata: I love you. Anyone else do some healing to get to the piece that you're going to be sharing? Is that too leading of a question? I thought it was going to be a good one.

Morgan Bassichis: I was preparing the content, let me just start by saying I just want to say two very brief things about the piece that I'm very grateful to get to share today. And just say two people's name. One is Alexi Wagner who part of the theme tonight is like Alexi's amazing work and so much of the documentation of our movements and our artists who are embedded in movements is shot by Alexi and is through Alexi's loving gaze and co authorship. I first want to say, you know, thank you to Alexi Wagner for the video that you'll see from me and also from some other people tonight. And then I also want to just say Ira Khonen Temple who is an incredible director of my piece. If you're not in the entertainment industry like all of us, my piece is a work in progress, okay, Work in progress. An excerpt of a work in progress which means if any part of it you don't like or it seems like that's not finished yet, that's in progress. Okay? That's an entertainment term for in progress. Check. Love you all.

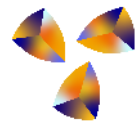
Una Osata: Yes. And Sister?

Michi Osata: I also wanted to wholeheartedly get on that Alexi train. Could not have done this without Alexi's kindness, patience, talent, and immense gifts. I know you're not watching right now because you're at a monastery, but we love you so much. And my piece, I began working on at the very beginning of the pandemic and it... you know, as the world kind of started swirling in this just so much fear, so much death, so much unknown, I've like really felt a need to make and know the home inside of me. And so that's where this piece began. And then like we've all been talking about from there it has been such a healing journey and gift to get to just see the reflections of the divinity in the people I love so much. And yeah, that's all I'll say on that.





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Una Osata: Oh, amazing. Okay. Well, I think we're actually going to get right into it. Thank you, thank you, panel. We'll bring you all back later, but we're going to see your work now. I love you all so much. Oh, my goodness. Oh, and I forgot to mention, we're here in New York City on Lenape land, the original stewards of this land, and we are still grateful to the Allied Media Projects for having us. My film was filmed and animated by Alexi. Big humongous thank you to them. And we're going to start off with my piece. And go. So, tech team, are you ready? Time do it!

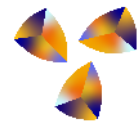
[Una Osata performance]

Una Osata: Thank you all so much! So in between we are going to share the performers information so you can tip them just like in real life so feel to tip the performers, love on them, follow them on patreon and instagram. All of that good stuff. So just a little tiny bit about that piece, I was sick in bed with COVID and I am still sick, so I had been in bed for three months, and the uprisings had just begun and I filmed this down the block from a precinct that had been shut down because the people were rising up. And you can see the beautiful people reclaiming the space, so when I filmed it I definitely had a fever and was also I cant be in bed anymore, the people are rising up, my city is more alive than I have seen it in so long and I need to be with the people. Because there was all this talk at the time like, these are good protesters, and these are bad protesters, and no these are people standing up defending Black lives, defending Black trans lives, like -- this is what our city is-- we look out for each other. So I really needed to share, this is what we love about our city is people looking out for each other and rising up. So that is that piece! And, thanks! Thank you everybody. I am so excited. This is what this evening is going to be. Next up, I am so excited to welcome to the virtual stage one of my sisters and loves, please give it up for Morgan Bassichis.

[Morgan Bassichis performance]

Una Osata: Oh, my goodness. What? Oh. Oh, Morgan. Oh. All right. So yes! What? Out of this world, exactly. So we're going to drop their information in the chat. You can Venmo a little tip to them because we're artists, we're out here making Anti-Zionist Bat Mitzvahs. Oh, my goodness, I was there that day and that video, it felt like you were there. And that is, oh my goodness. Thank you, Morgan. Just thank you for being in this world and sharing your art with us. And can't wait to have some Seltzer with you, but not from Sodastream. It is a pop hit. Pop. All right. Thank you so much. That was incredible. All right. We're going to bring to the stage, we're going to keep this show rolling. So make sure to tip Morgan, find them on Instagram. You'll do yourself a favor. And next up we have Junior Mintt. She told us a little bit about the piece and now you're going to get to experience it. So please give it up for Junior Mintt.





[Junior Mintt's performance]

Una Osata: Oh! Gorgeous. Oh. Thank you. Oh, thank you, Junior Mintt. Oh. That was incredible. Thank you for sharing. And once again, another world premiere right here for you all. Sister was crying so much her lashes fell off. Yeah! Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. So we're going to put her info in the chat. Please, join! She's got a new make up line, like what? Yes! Yes! So you can tip her, you can join her Patreon, follow her on Instagram. O.M.G. Oh, thank you. Thank you. So this is what I am talking about. This is the power of the healing of the performance of the resistance. This is our work. And we're together. Got the other two on camera. Just like crying. After a performance like that. Like what? All right. We're going to keep it rolling. Yes. Just in awe and love. We're going to keep it rolling. We're so excited, another world premiere. So please give it up for Sister Selva.

[Sister Selva Performance]

Una Osata: Oh, my God. Perfection. Yes. Yes. Yes. Okay. So we're dropping her info in the chat. You can follow her, send her a tip, it's not free to be in the forest.. No it is, but send her a tip. Join her Patreon. And just little did you know, Sister Selva just graduated from acupuncture school and after six years and she was the valedictorian. You want to sign up for future acupuncture with her. Make sure you follow her. You'll get all the information. Oh, my God. This is like the most incredible show I've ever been a part of. I mean, like all of those.. I just feel like Sister, when you brought in all those people, were there like 30... how many people were involved in that? 30? Cool. I'm going to bring back the cast, if you can already see. Oh, my God. Y'all are incredible. Give it up again for Sister Selva, Junior Mintt, Morgan Bassichis, and me!

Junior Mintt: Yes!

Una Osata: Oh, my goodness. Is there anything anyone wants or needs to say?

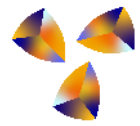
Michi Osata: I'm blown away.

Morgan Bassichis: Blown away.

Junior Mintt: Same.

Una Osata: Same. Yeah. Same, same, same.





Junior Mintt: I'm shook. There's nothing better than getting to watch queer people exist, get to inhabit space, get to express ourselves without leaving a piece of ourselves out. I'm a full believer that when two or more queer people are together, Marshall is watching, Sylvia is watching, and they would be very, very proud of what we did today.

Una Osata: Yes. And literally Miss Major probably is tuning in and watching and was in Sister's video and we love you.

Junior Mintt: Ms. Major gets me giddy. The exemplification of everything I try to model myself after and grow myself into. And I'm just so thankful. Just so thankful for her.

Morgan Bassichis: Everything you did in that incredible video. That video, Junior Mintt, oh, my God. Oh, my God. Truly transcendent.

Junior Mintt: Thank you.

Michi Osata: That is real.

Junior Mintt: And that was filmed at a church in the lower west side and it was the first time I ever walked into a space that was religious in any capacity and felt immediately like I was meant to be there. My full self. And they were so excited to have me film there. And they literally were like as soon as you finish the video, please send it to us, we want to see it. And it was the kind of space where immediately I was like and this is the universe working overtime. Working overtime. And so thank you for connecting, because the one thing that you always need with resistance is always look at yourself and be proud of the fact that you made it to another day to keep fighting, to keep pushing, to keep being yourself, and that song for me is one that I listen to that song when I'm having a bad day or a good day. Never would have made it without me.

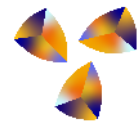
Una Osata: True. True. And oh, to each of you, you are the inspiration that, like, the inspiration and love and embodiment of all of the things that like this is just like soul nourishment. Oh, my goodness. Morgan, your Bar Mitzvah. Junior Mintt, your service. Sister Selva, your house. Oh, my goodness. Like truly, thank you all so much. I mean it. My soul needed it. So grateful to you all. Truly, truly, truly. And thank you to our interpreters. You all have just been so incredible. Oh, my goodness. Just sharing all of it with such beauty and ah! And to AMP, we're so grateful we could close out this series. The work you do is truly divine. And we're so grateful for you all. Thank you.

Michi Osata: Thank you, Sister. Thank you.





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Morgan Bassichis: Thank you, Una, for bringing us together. Love you so much.
Junior Mintt: Thank you for the amazing hosting as well. You set the tone and create the energy in this space, and you filled it with one of love, of encouragement, and support. And thank you so much for being each and every one of you for being who you are, because this event would not be the same if there were other people here and the joy we filled, the amount of ourselves we put into this, I'm so thankful to be a part of it and to get to spend time with all of you. I love you.

Michi Osata: Love you.

Morgan Bassichis: Love you.

Una Osata: Love you. We're going to bring Brenda back to the stage, our incredible event producer, coordinator, making it all happen. Thank you, Brenda. You are coming back to the stage. And there you are. Thank you.

Brenda Hernandez: Hi. Oh o m g. Did you have to grab Kleenex because I did! We were brought to church, we were brought home, we were taken to a Bar Mitzvah. I hope that everyone is throwing those emojis in the chat and showing all the love. And I see all the love in there for Una, Michi, Morgan and Junior. We're so blessed to see your magic on the screen and for you to share your magic and talent and beauty and grace with everyone here today. So thank you. Thank you to the audience for sharing the energy in the chat and on social media, and a special shout out, of course, to our captioner Karyn and our incredible ASL interpreters Lisa and Angelique. This event would not be the same without them. A special thank you also to AMP's creative digital communication specialist, I'm so excited, Molly, who's in the livestream chat supporting everyone along and has been supporting the events throughout the season. And last but definitely not least, please share some love for the director of the AMP Seeds program whose birthday is today. Happy birthday, Nandi. We celebrate you today and always. You can check out all of our events at bit.ly/seedsseries. If you would like to share your thoughts on today's wonderful magic, please go to bit.ly/fall2021feedback. We would love to hear from you. Please sign up for the AMP news newsletter at alliedmedia.org to stay connected for what's coming up next AMP Seeds and AMP in general. Thank you so much again. It was wonderful to close this season with everyone here today. Be well, and see you next year. Bye.

